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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Kenney Honored for Work to Empower North Minneapolis Individuals with Disabilities and Their Families

Julie Kenney will receive the Irving Martin Professional of the Year Award from The Arc Minnesota. Kenney will be honored at The Arc Minnesota's Awards Banquet on Friday evening, September 23, 2016 at the Shoreview Community Center in Shoreview, Minnesota.

Kenney is Executive Director of IPSII, Inc. (Independence, Productivity, Self-Determination, Integration, and Inclusion). Through IPSII's On Eagles Wings programs, Kenney teaches a five-month leadership training for African American parents in North Minneapolis who have children under age 18 with developmental disabilities. More than 90 parents and self-advocates have been trained on individual rights, public policy advocacy, and self-advocacy skills. They have learned about relevant disability laws and court decisions, visited the State Capitol, and told their stories to legislators. Evaluations of On Eagles Wings graduates showed dramatic improvement in independence, self-determination, and inclusion.

IPSII has also focused on increasing emergency preparedness for families and their children with disabilities. After the 2011 tornado in North Minneapolis, Kenney trained self-advocates, their families, and service providers how to create individualized plans to deal with emergency situations. In total, more than 200 people have gained crucial knowledge in responding to natural disasters and similar crises. Kenney works to ensure all her presentations and programming are culturally sensitive and culturally appropriate.

The Arc Minnesota's September 23rd banquet honoring Kenney will be held at 6:30 p.m. at the Shoreview Community Center, 4580 Victoria Street North in Shoreview, Minnesota. You can order tickets for the event by contacting Mike Gude at 651-604-8066 or mikeg@arcmn.org.

The Irving Martin Professional of the Year Award honors an individual employed in community services for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities who has demonstrated sensitivity and the ability to provide an outstanding quality of service, which results in increased independence for the people being served.

For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities

The Arc Minnesota's Awards Banquet is part of the organization's annual state conference. This year's conference, "The Power of Community: Connections That Transform Lives," is also being held at the Shoreview Community Center on Saturday, September 24, 2016. The all-day event will include workshops on best practices, success stories, and one-on-one assistance and advice to help people with disabilities become more fully included in their community. The conference is geared to people with disabilities, their family members, and direct care staff who support them. For more information, go to www.arcmn.org/state-conference-2016

The Arc Minnesota is a statewide, non-profit organization that promotes and protects the human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and actively supports their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes. It is supported by members, partners, and 10 affiliated chapters statewide. For more information, go to www.arcmn.org

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